



THE

KNIGHT



L.N.A. Meeting Sunday, March 15, 1:30 PM. C.I.C.F. Skyway Room #272. BE THERE!

Vol. III No. 5 Issue #17. The Lithuanian Numismatic Association. February-March, 1981

LITHUANIAN COIN TRENDS

Since our inception three years ago, we've seen the retail prices on Lithuanian coins change substantially as more data concerning mintages, patterns, and availability have been published in The Knight, and in the general numismatic press. For example, in the last couple of years, there have been several large hoards of the 5 litai coins of both 1925 and 1936 which have been placed on the market, substantially lowering the price of those particular coins close to bullion value. On the other hand, the minor copper pieces are very difficult to obtain, and have been commanding much higher premiums, especially in UNC condition. Lithuanians who fled during WWII took the intrinsic value silver coins with them, leaving the minor coppers behind. The most difficult to obtain is the 1925 50 centu coin.

Presented here is a coin-by-coin description, and price trends for grades of F, VF, XF, and UNC. Also given here are the trends for all known patterns and test strikes, many of which have NOT been listed in Krause's "Standard Catalog of World Coins." Each coin has been assigned an official L.N.A. number which should be used for easy identification. NOTE: Those with a small star before the number means they are not presently listed in the "telephone book," and those with a circle before the number bear different catalog numbers than what is listed in Krause.

LNA	DATE	MINTAGE	F	VF	XF	UNC
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CENTAS

Aluminum-bronze. 1.6 gr. 16 mm.

1 1925 5 mill. \$2 \$4 \$7 \$16

1a ★ Obverse uniface test strike. -----\$95

1b ★ Reverse uniface test strike. -----\$110

Bronze. 1 gr. 16.5 mm.

9 1936 9,955,090 \$1 \$3 \$7 \$10

2 CENTAI

Bronze. 2.3 gr. 18.5 mm.

10 1936 4,951,107 \$2.50 \$4 \$8 \$19

5 CENTAI

Aluminum-Bronze. 2.1 gr. 19 mm.

2 1925 12 mill. \$2 \$4 \$6 \$15

2a ★ Obverse uniface test strike -----\$90

2b ★ Reverse uniface test strike -----\$100

Bronze. 3 gr. 20.5 mm.

11 1936 4,800,000 \$2 \$3 \$8 \$16

10 CENTU

Aluminum-bronze. 3 gr. 21 mm.

3 1925 12 mill. \$2 \$3.50 \$8 \$15

3a ★ Obverse uniface test strike -----\$125

3b ★ Reverse uniface test strike -----\$115

20 CENTU

Aluminum-bronze. 4 gr. 23 mm.

4 1925 8 mill. \$2 \$3 \$8 \$17

4a ★ Obverse uniface test strike -----\$150

4b ★ Reverse uniface test strike -----\$120

LNA	DATE	MINTAGE	F	VF	XF	UNC
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50 CENTU

Aluminum-bronze. 5 gr. 25 mm.

5 1925 5 mill. \$6 \$9 \$15 \$28

5a ★ Obverse uniface test strike -----\$165

5b ★ Reverse uniface test strike -----\$150

1 LITAS

.500 Silver. 2.7 gr. 19 mm. Reeded edge

6 1925 5,985,096 \$3 \$5 \$10 \$15

2 LITU

.500 Silver. 5.4 gr. 23 mm. Reeded edge

7 1925 3,000,145 \$3 \$5 \$8 \$20

2 LITAI (Patterns)

Obv: Pres. A. Smetona. Rev: Vytis, date, 1938

Brass, edge "LIETUVA • LIETUVA • LIETUVA"

15a • 1938 ----- \$300

.800 silver. 5.4 gr. 23 mm.

15b • 1938 ----- Reeded edge \$350

15c • 1938 ----- Lettered edge (as 15a) \$350

15d • 1938 ----- Plain edge \$425

Reverse: Columns of Gediminas, date 1938

16a • 1938 ----- Plain edge \$800

★ 16b • 1938 ----- Lettered edge (as 15a) \$900

5 LITAI

.500 Silver. 13.5 gr. 30 mm. reeded edge

8 1925 1,000,121 \$7 \$10 \$15 \$35

Trends continued on page 2.....

2. TRENDS...

LNA DATE MINTAGE F VF XF UNC

.750 silver. 9 gr. 27 mm. Lettered edge.

OBV: Dr. Jonas Basanavičius

12 1936 2,612,000 \$5 \$10 \$13 \$17

12a • 1936 plain edge pattern, rotated rev. \$450

12b • 1936 plain edge pattern, designers name
"J. ZIKARAS" spelled out below bust \$350

10 LITU

.750 Silver. 18 gr. 32 mm. Lettered edge.

OBV: Grand Duke Vytautas the Great

13 1936 720,000 \$13 \$20 \$30 \$45

• 13a Plain edge pattern, rotated reverse \$500

20th Anniversary Commemorative. Obv: President
Antanas Smetona. Rev: Columns of Gediminas.

14 1938 170,000 -- \$30 \$50 \$85

★ 14.1 Obliterated 1938 coin, defaced by commun-
ists by machine in 1940. No sales reported.

★ 14a Pattern, rotated reverse, only 2 stars on
lettered edge (instead of reg. 3) \$600

★ 14c Struck in Gold. UNIQUE. Stolen from Smetona
family here in U.S. during WWII. ---

THE KNIGHT

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tion of the Lithuanian Numismatic Association, P.
O. Box 612, Columbia, Maryland 21045. Frank Passic
, Albion, Michigan, EDITOR. Robert J. Douchis,
Baltimore, Maryland, DIRECTOR. Subscription for 6
bi-monthly issues (June to June), a donation of
\$8 or more U.S.; \$10 or more overseas.

We welcome our "new" readers who are being
given this page 1 and 2 as a hand-out at the CICF
as a free sample. This is part of an 8 page pub-
lication filled with Lithuanian numismatics, both
ancient, medieval, and modern. Also included as
part of an appendix is the English translation
(exclusively published here) of Jonas K. Karys'
book, Ancient Lithuanian Money, which deals with
the money of Lithuania from ancient days through
the days of union with Poland. This is a MUST for
collectors of Polish and/or Russian numismatics.
We are including 30 pages of translation in serial
form with each issue; this is a 3-year project.

We accept advertising, and dealers who handle
Lithuanian, Lithuanian/Polish material will find
an eager readership here. Write for rates.

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IBNS JOURNAL FEATURES LITH. NOTE

A highly illustrated article entitled, "The
Lithuanian 1938 10-Lits Mystery Banknote" was
the feature article in the International Bank
Note Society Journal, Vol. 19, No. 4, Winter
1980/81. Written by The Knight editor Frank Pas-
sic, this lengthy 6-page research summary focu-
sed on the reasons why the note was never issued
for circulation.

Featured were numerous biographies of the
famous Council of Lithuania, which declared the
independence of Lithuania on February 16, 1918,
and whose group picture appears on the reverse
of the note. Ample section was devoted to Lith-
uanian history, so foreign numismatists could
understand fully the implications surrounding
the design found on this most historic, yet rare
unissued banknote.

This is a major article concerning Lithuan-
ian numismatics, and should be in the library of
every Lithuanian collector. Many IBNS members
are also LNA members, including past-president
Ruth Hill, and 1st vice-president John Glynn.
The IBNS Journal frequently publishes articles
concerning E. European banknotes, which many
times are in some way directly or indirectly re-
lated to Lithuanian or Baltic area numismatics.

Increase your education, and join the IBNS.
(When writing, mention the LNA). Membership is
\$17.50 per year, which includes receiving the
quarterly publication IBNS Journal. Individual
issues cost \$5 each. To join, write: IBNS Sec-
retary, c/o Milan Alusic, P.O. Box 1222, Racine,
Wisconsin 53405.

OUR L.N.A. MEETING

Our 3rd annual L.N.A. meeting will be held
Sunday March 15, 1981 at 1:30 PM in the Skyway
room #272 (on the upstairs reception level of
the E. Tower) of the Hyatt Regency Hotel, 151 E.
Wacker Dr., in Chicago, as part of the Chicago
International Coin Fair. The Knight editor Frank
Passic and LNA director Robert Douchis will be
looking forward to meeting you.

In addition to a short business meeting, we
will be premiering a new slide presentation,
entitled, "The Currency of Lithuania," featuring
beautiful color slides of Lithuanian banknotes,
including some rare PAVYZDYS specimen examples.

For those coming for the whole weekend, we'll
be around to give you tours of the Lithuanian
attractions in Chicago, including the famous
Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture, and stop
off at a Lithuanian restaurant for some food.

Try and make it if you can! Let's show every-
one that Lith. numismatics is alive and well!
Last year we had 17 persons attend, beating the
number who went to the IBNS meeting. Bring your
collections, and we'll have a fine time toge-
ther. WE'LL SEE YOU THERE!

1565 3 GRAŠIS (GUM.-623) WITH PSALM 2:4

As we have been presenting to you in serial form the English translation of Jonas K. Karys' 1959 book, "Ancient Lithuanian Money," we thought we'd feature for the first time as our coin of the month a very special Lithuanian coin: the satirical 1565 3-Grašis.

The subject of Polonization of Lithuania and Lithuanians is not new to the 20th century, but dates back centuries to the time when Grand Duke Jogaila (Pol: Jagello) married Poland's Queen Jadwiga in 1386. Through the years the Poles seemed to have an obsession with Polonizing the "pagan" Lithuanians, and this theme is found throughout many aspects of Lithuanian history and life, including numismatics.

Sigismundus Augustus was the last separately elected Grand Duke of Lithuania, and the last ruler of Lithuania descended from the lineage of Gediminas. Although Lithuanian by ethnicity, he abandoned much of it in favor of Polish influence, and moved to Cracow, the Polish capital. "S.A. was not interested in Lithuania's concerns, and gave them but little thought. He associated mostly with Poles, and had contracted foreign habits," states Karys (Pg. 260).

Regarding Lithuanian coinage, the Lithuanian coin standard was 1/5 (20%) "better" intrinsically in value than the Polish, and this made the Poles mad, and gave the Lithuanians a sense of pride. The Lithuanians refused to lower the higher quality of their standard to meet the inferior Polish one. At the mint in the capital city of Vilnius, there was always an attempt to slyly upgrade the importance of Lithuanian coins by changing the inscriptions slightly, or omitting certain Polish symbols, or degrading them to a lower position.

It was under this background that the Lithuanian mint produced its most famous nationalistic coin, which is a lasting testimony of the sovereignty of Lithuania and its rejection of Polonization. The progression of the 3-grašis pieces minted during Sigismundus' reign and the eventual climax is recorded by Jonas K. Karys, beginning on page 274:

"The first 3-grašis were issued with a transverse inscription on the reverse: 'III GROSS AR TRIPL MAG

DUCA LITVA,' which translates, 'A triple silver grašis of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.' The Vytis symbol is displaced to an insignificant spot below the inscription. The market value of the 3-grašis about equalled 3 Polish groshes. There were no complaints from Poland concerning this coin.

Suddenly in 1562, the appearance of the Lithuanian 3-grašis changed: in place of the ruler's bust, his crowned monogram appeared, while the 4 line inscript-



ion, "III GROSS..." was replaced by the Lithuanian Knight, occupying the entire field. Finally, the very weight of the 3-grašis jumped up outdistanced the 3-grosh of Poland in theoretical value.



Such a change in the coins of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania raised an entire maelstrom of dissatisfaction in the royal palace of

Sigismundus Augustus in Cracow. The Poles began to protest violently that the Lithuanian 3-grašis broke with tradition and did not conform to ancient statutes, left by Sigismundus the Old. True, by the regulation of 1528, he had initiated and established in Poland the 3-grosh with transverse inscriptions and with currently operating methods, but the regulation was not applicable to Lithuania. However, for the Poles, bent upon their peculiar ends, it became an excuse to clamor and quarrel. They attacked this Lithuanian coin naturally, and at the same time blamed G. Tarla, the head of the coin mint in Vilnius, fundamentally not for this or that change in the 3-grašis piece, but most surely for displaying in such a dominating position the Lithuanian patriotic symbol, Vytis., which Tarla, toadying to the Lithuanians at Vilnius, had exhibited on the coin with all stateliness. 'A new attempt at separatism!...'

We will never know who was the initiator of this matter in Lithuania or who perpetuated this taunting of the Poles. The very fact however, draws our attention to the situation that some men of eminence in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania still felt the onus of subjugation, and still continued to fight for Lithuania's autonomy. Sigismundus Augustus himself surely did not participate in this 'conspiracy.'

That is especially emphasized by the following fact: seemingly in reply to the Poles' tendentious grumbling, there was issued from the Vilnius mint in 1565 another new 3-grašis, again with a transverse four-line inscription, but not located in the place of the Vytis, but instead above the ruler's monogram, where at the start there had been an even more important item: the head of Sigismundus Augustus...

Continued on next page....



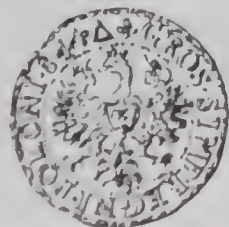
Even worse, the Vytis was carried to the obverse side of the coin (o horrible dictu!) and so was raised even higher and honored. And even this is not all. In place of the routine legend, describing the nominal value of the coin, and to which country it pertained, there was spread across the 3-grašis from edge to edge, in mockery of the aggressors (Poles) that biting sentence from the 2nd Psalm of David: "QUI HABITAT IN COELIS IRRIDEBIT EOS", meaning, "He who sits in the heavens laughs at them."

["He who sits in the heavens laughs, the Lord scoffs at them." ---Psalm 2:4, NAS. Paraphrased, "the Lord is laughing at the Poles for thinking they could get the Lithuanians to "equalize" their coinage down to the Polish standard, and accept Polish symbols and Polonization."]

So, the leadership of the mint and eminent Lithuanians standing in back of it in Vilnius, on at least one occasion gave the Poles what was coming to them. The Poles, full of outrage, descended upon Sigismundus Augustus, who in this case was least at fault. When these 3-grašis coins appeared in Polish provinces, the storm boiled over. The Bishop of Cracow F. Krasinski supported the indignation of the Polish boyars, and sent a special letter addressed to Sigismundus Augustus. Having received that letter, the ruler personally investigated the "case," and in the beginning of 1566, totally banned further striking of that coin.

Well, there you have it! The 1565 3-grašis coin bears the Gumowski catalog number of G-623. It was also minted briefly in 1566, before the Poles put a stop to this form of Lithuanian nationalism. The 1566 coin is very rare, while the one with the 1565 date is quite scarce. Currently on the numismatic market the 1565 coin (if one is ever offered) fetches around \$300.

Collectors should beware however that this satirical Lithuanian coin will often bear "Pole holes," and an unutilized piece is difficult to come by. When these coins were circulated, the Poles purposely punched holes in the coins, defaced them, and melted them for silver value at the nearest opportune moment; hence, the "Pole hole." On account of that, the 1565 Lithuanian 3-grašis coin is a highly desired Lithuanian coin, indeed. Fortunate are those collectors who own one.



ANA LM #1776

BRUCE DONAHUECoins of Poland &
Lithuania.P. O. BOX 92
ACCORD, MASS. 02018
617-659-7777

WANTED: Good-quality Lithuanian banknotes, other than P-10, 15, 23-27. Edward Bochniak, 404 Lee Ave., Endwell, N.Y. 13760

FOR SALE: Y-10 1936 2 centai, VF. \$4. Frank Passic, 900 S. Eaton St., Albion, MI 49224

FOR SALE: Matching pair (obv & rev) of 1925 10 Centų uniface test strikes (LNA #3a & 3b). Obv. is toned UNC, Rev. is VF (only known circ. uniface piece). Bargain at \$180.00. Bob Dou-chis, Box 612, Columbia, MD 21045.

LETTERS:

It was a distinct pleasure to read your fine article on the mystery banknote of Lithuania [IBNS Journal, see page 2 this issue]. I have to admit that in all the years I've collected, studied and looked for notes, I never have seen an example of this 10 Lity note. I especially like the supplementary data you supplied with the story of the note itself. I imagine some of these photos are rather hard to come by--who would have saved them?

One aspect of this note that is important to me is that it is a commemorative, and there are not so many of those in banknotes. I had not realized its commemorative nature until I read your article, so now I'll be even more on the look-out for one if I'm ever so lucky to find it!

--Neil Shafer, President, Western Publish. Co.

Editors note: Is anyone out there? Are you learning and enjoying The Knight? Feel free to write us and comment. We've received almost no correspondence in the last two months...

**POLISH
BADGE**

Those Polish soldiers who participated in the treaty violations and invasions of Lithuania and Belorussia were awarded this badge /insignia by the Polish regime.



The Polish eagle can be seen in the center. To the left is "LIT.," meaning "Lithuania." On the right, "BIAŁ.," for Belorussia. On the top, the word "Front," and on the bottom we find the dates 1919-1920, signifying the years of early invasion, as Poland was establishing her empire at the expense of Lithuania and White Russia. (Photo courtesy of Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture in Chicago, which owns the pictured badge.)

While preparing the article on our coin of the month, the 1565 3-grašis, we dug from the archives a postcard featuring a picture of a medal by the Lithuanian medalist, Petras Rimša. Entitled, "Lithuania and Poland: UNITY and WAR," the card features a photo of Rimša's medal which he exhibited in several U.S. cities as part of his 1936-37 tour. Several of his artistic creations were reproduced on post cards.

The obverse is entitled, "UNION." In the center is depicted the 1565 3-grašis coin which was produced by Lithuanian noblemen who were opposed to the Union with Poland. The satirical verse from the Psalm of David appears in large letters in the center: "QUI HABITAT IN COELIS IRRIDEBIT EOS."

At the head of the medallion is a favorite Polish proverb: "Wolni z wolnymi; Rowni z rownymi," which translates, "The free with the free, equals with equals." That phrase was used by the Poles as a pretext to subjugating the Lithuanian nation throughout the centuries. Accordingly in the center separating the phrase is a mask, signifying the hypocrisy of the Polish words. Just below in an oval are two hands which are clasped, against the background of a sword.

At the very bottom are shown an enamored dog and cat, to represent the incompatibility of the union. The word "UNIJA" appears at the very bottom on the rim of the obverse. On the left side in an oval space is found the Polish eagle. Opposite it on the right is Lithuania's symbol, Vytis.

The reverse is entitled, "WAR," and the word "KOVA" is spelled out at the very bottom on the rim. This side depicts the Vytis symbol, the emblem of Lithuania, in combat with the Polish eagle. It is the prophecy of the nobility of 1565 fulfilled. The dog and cat, represented only by heads, are far apart. They are located on the edge of the rim at the center, extreme left and right.

Rimša's subject matter was of course due to Poland's seizure of Lithuania's capital city of Vilnius, which Poland held from 1920 to 1939. Rimša was forced to move his studio to Kaunas during this period. Lithuania and Poland remained in a state of war throughout most of the time of independence as a result of Polish animosities against nearly a third of Lithuanian territory (Suvalkai, Seinai, Gardinas, Lyda, Vilnius, etc.) Poland's dream of subjugating the Lithuanian nation into a revived "union" was thwarted by the Lithuanian independence



movement in the 20th century.

The medal reverse showing the fighting symbols reflects the state of war between the two countries. The cat and dog's incompatibility on the medal reflects the fact that the Poles and Lithuanians are in no way ethnically related, since the Poles are Slavic, and the Lithuanians are of the Baltic race of people.

Rimša's original huge cast for this medal is presently on exhibit in occupied-Lithuania at the now so-called "stained-glass museum" in Kaunas.

FROM THE ARCHIVES



By Joe Adomaitis, Storrs, Conn. Continued from last issue....

I have tried to carefully explain my reasoning in the creation of the following grading system. I think it was necessary to show the special differences of Lithuanian and American coins and explain why tradition was broken. I do not claim to have created "the" definitive grading system for the 1936 5 Litai. In fact, I am quite sure one will never exist. But I do hope the system presented here will be helpful to those who collect or deal in Lithuanian coins.

I conclude by encouraging the reader to locate and examine a truly uncirculated Basanavičius piece. This should give you a better understanding of what is stated below, especially concerning the concept of minor hairlines. Unfortunately we cannot reproduce photographs or decent line drawings of these various grades. Hopefully in the future we shall have a Lithuanian version of "Photograde" that members can borrow or purchase.

* * *

UNC: 1. No wear and a sharp strike on both sides.

XF: OBV:

1. Very slight wear on eyebrow, sideburns, and tip of mustache.
2. Detail in both beard and hair sharp.
3. Hair shows most minor hairlines.

REV:

1. Design is sharp.
2. Rider's knee armor must be distinct.

VF: OBV:

1. Outline of eyebrow is complete.
2. Design is not sharp.
3. Beard is noticeably worn in spots.
4. Many minor hairlines in hair are missing.

REV:

1. Design still seems sharp to the naked eye.
2. Rider's knee armor may not be very distinct.

NOTE: a VF+ coin is an XF coin in which only two of the following holds true: 1) detail in beard sharp, 2) Hair is sharp showing most minor hairlines, 3) rider's knee armor must be distinct.

F: OBV:

1. Outline of eyebrow worn through in spots.
2. Mustache and cheekbone well worn.
3. Beard and hair lack considerable detail.

REV:

1. Bridle strap worn through in spots.

Many thanks to the Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture in Chicago. They had entrusted me with over 200 Basanavičius coins which I studied in my research.

[Note: the Balzekas museum has many Lithuanian Y1-14 coins for sale in various grades from G to UNC in their gift shop. Whatever you need, let them know and they'll send you the prices for each grade. 4012 Archer Ave, Chicago, Ill. 60632.]

COIN WORLD

The January 28, 1981 issue of Coin World on page 31 featured a lengthy article by Robert Obojski entitled, "A Catalog of Polish Coins Since 1506, Coinage Shows Great Diversity." Well written, this narrative dealt with Poland's kings and their subsequent mintage issues.

Unfortunately, pictured as the head photograph was a LITHUANIAN 2-denar of Sigismund Augustus, showing the Lithuanian Vytis! This is absolutely not a Polish coin whatsoever: it was made in LITHUANIA, at the mint in Vilnius, using the LITHUANIAN coin standard, BEFORE the 1569 union with Poland, and with the Lithuanian symbol Vytis prominently displayed on it, with NO Polish symbols whatsoever on it!

The article reflected the well common practice of lumping Lithuanian Grand Duchy coins as under "Poland."

As our LNA members will be reading in Karys' book translation, Lithuanian collectors like to list their own country's coins under "Lithuania," NOT Poland!. Are Canada's coins listed under "England" because they have Queen Elizabeth on them? Of course not!

It is time for Lithuanian collectors to stand up and be counted in face of the strong Polish influence in the numismatic world. To protest, write: Coin World, P.O. Box 150, Sidney, Ohio 45367.

ARCHIVES...

...Taken from the ALPS bulletin, #5, June, 1949, page 28.

Unusual Wooden Money

The Chicago Numismatic Roundtable issued two different kinds of wooden souvenir money tokens. The 25 cent token is of plywood 5 mm. thick, and about 4 inches square.

OBVERSE: has an American Eagle within a heraldic shield adorned with 2 laurel branches. And on both sides of the American emblem, there are Emblems of 6 Other nations: Brazil, Lithuania, Norway, Silesia, Sweden, Oirousiana. Under all, the date, 1949. Under this, a square tablet with inscription: GOOD FOR 25 CENTS. On the left, the promissory note wording printed. On the right, the signatures of the CNR commiss oners, who guarantee the redemption of those wooden money tokens.

REVERSE: has a hand engraved center ornament: the Book, the Torch, the date 1934-1949 floating in the smoke of the torch, and a Laurel adorning all this. On the left side is the denomination 25 c. On top, inscription reads: CHICAGO NUMISMATIC ROUNDTABLE A.D. 1949. At the bottom:

Continued on page 7....

Meet the Artist...

This month we present as our feature artist the designer of Lithuanian's coins of 1925, 1936 and 1938: Juozas Zikaras. Born in Paliukai (near Panevėžys) on November 18, 1881, he studied at the Trutnev's drawing school 1904-06, and later went to St. Petersburg, returning to Lithuania in 1918.

For many years he taught drawing at the Panevėžys High School, and then in 1929 headed the sculpture studio of the Art School in Kaunas, which he headed until 1940. One of his most famous sculptures was entitled "Knygnešys", or "the Book-Smuggler", depicting a man from Tilžė (Tilsit) with a knapsack of Lithuania books on his back bringing them into his homeland. Zikaras also designed the famous Lithuanian Statue of Liberty which stood in front of the Vytautas the Great Museum in Kaunas, and which is depicted on the reverse of the 1930 20 Lity banknote.

Zikaras was caught in Lithuania during the Soviet occupation, and although the communists gave him an elevated position as art professor chairman, he was unable to cope with the bondage of living under communism and committed suicide on November 10, 1944.

Zikaras' rendition of Vytis, combined the historical aspects and reduced the superfluous items which had accumulated on it in later years. His rendition became the official version, and was also used on Lithuanian passports, documents, etc.

As we reported in The Knight earlier, the Belgians in 1936 were so amazed with Zikaras' artistic qualities in designing Lithuanian coins, that only their national pride kept them from asking him to place the bust of their own king on Belgian coins! Zikaras' initials "J.Z." appear under the bust of Jonas Basanavičius on the 1936 5 Litai coin. His last name, "J. ZIKARAS" is spelled out on the pattern coin which was never struck for circulation. (LNA #12b).

ARCHIVES...

15th ANNIVERSARY. The 25 cent token is printed in 2 colors: sepia brown, and vermillion. The illustrated is only a shadow of the original, which is nice.

The 15 Cent Token: A head of the medieval Knight within a diamond tablet and the inscription around it reads: CHICAGO NUMISMATIC ROUNDTABLE A.D. 1949. Under this--a large cypher 15 CENTS, on its left, Sig., and on the right is the serial No. At the bottom, "REDEEMABLE AT ANY TIME BY CNR. VOID AFTER DEC. 31, 1949." Reverse: A plain inscription...Then the signatures by hand around the edge. The plywood planchet is 2 x 3 1/2 " and 1/4 " thick. "

The above "wooden money" was apparently the brainchild of Dr. Alexander M. Račkus, who was apparently the instigator of the Chicago Numismatic Roundtable. Several examples of this "money" recently appeared at the Balzekas Museum in Chicago, being used for space dividers in the library card catalog file! They were promptly removed and placed in the numismatic archives where they belong.



MEDAL RESEARCH

We are very happy to announce that beginning with the next issue of The Knight we will be including as a regular part of our publication information devoted to Lithuanian medals, orders, and decorations, with pictures and histories of all aspects involved.

Having obtained a rare nearly complete listing of the orders and decorations issued by the Republic of Lithuania 1918-40, this listing has been translated and will be presented here exclusively in The Knight. Originally published in the 1934 Army Manual "Karių Kalendoras," this listing has been unknown here in the West.

Our military orders expert is Hank Gaidis of Olney, Maryland, who has an extensive Lithuanian military decoration and medal collection, and who will be writing the medallic section each issue. Assisting him will be Vince Alones, veteran Lithuanian collector, who also has a keen interest in medallic items.

Included in our listing will be the: Order of Gediminas, Cross of Vytis, Order of Vytautas the Great, Independence Medal, Saulių Zvaigždė medals, etc. Also included will be some rare unissued medals, and reproductions of original certificates accompanying each decoration.

8. QUIZ

O.K. members---test your knowledge. In the past three years we've filled The Knight with lots of educational material concerning Lithuanian numismatics. Now it's time to see how much you have learned. Below in the left column is a series of 20 statements, of which you are to match with a letter and statement on the right hand column. There are 20 questions, with 38 possible answers. You choose the correct answers.

- | | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Last medieval Lit. coin minted here 1706-07. | A. August | U. Šmetona |
| 2. Lithuanian currency unit after 1922. | B. Galdikas | V. Litas |
| 3. Last President of the Bank of Lithuania. | C. Ivory | W. Šauliai |
| 4. Capital of Lithuania. | D. Zikaras | X. Šilutės |
| 5. Silver bar stick money. | E. Lats | Y. Stašinskas |
| 6. Designer of Lithuanian coins. | F. Gardinas | Z. Jomantas |
| 7. Eccentric Lithuanian-American numismatist. | G. Rimša | AA. Žmuidzinavičius |
| 8. Birthplace of Victor David Brenner. | H. Klaipėda | BB. Amber |
| 9. Famous Lithuanian medalist. | I. Grašis | CC. Thomas Cook & Co. |
| 10. Communist stamp-sized money circulated here. | J. England | DD. Belgium |
| 11. High Commissioner of "Memel" district. | K. Kalendoras | EE. Račkus |
| 12. Bust appears on 1928 50 Litų banknote. | L. Kaunas | FF. Vilnius |
| 13. Lithuanian mint director. | M. Petsinė | GG. Kapos |
| 14. 1925 coins minted here. | N. Skatikas | HH. Auksinas |
| 15. Printers of 1922 "permanent" banknotes. | O. Paknys | II. Panevėžys |
| 16. Name of German/Lith currency up to 1922. | P. Jade | JJ. Basanavičius |
| 17. Early Lithuanian "money" object. | Q. Varnas | KK. G. Hasse |
| 18. Artist who designed 1922 "permanent" banknotes. | R. May | LL. July |
| 19. Designer of 1924 500 Litų banknote. | S. Zaunius | MM. June |
| 20. Month Lithuanian mint opened. | T. Bradbury, Wil-
kinson & Co. | Answers published next
issue.... |



Pictured above (enlarged) is the Vilnius University 400th Anniversary Medal, struck here in the U.S. in 1979 by the Franklin Mint, and designed by Vytautas Kašuba. For a description, see The Knight Volume 2, #4, December-January 1979/80.

symbols.⁵² The silver moldings marked with those signs would have to be prepared (or at least, legalized), not earlier than the era of Gediminas-Kęstutis, since Gediminas introduced the first, and the Knight originally appeared on the coins of Kęstutis.⁵³

Among the discoveries, there appeared even "countersigned" castings; the castings themselves are Lithuanian. The counter-signs upon them are foreign. It was learned that about the 13th century, Novograd, Pskov, and Kiev (and probably other eastern Slav cities) had begun to coordinate the Lithuanian cast monies received there with local "money units" (by reducing the standard), and to legalize them officially with their countersigned stamps. On some of these countersigned castings we find a single mark. On others, two, three, and even more (for example, see Fig. 23., 4)⁵⁴. And since these marks in the majority are fantastic, unclear, and old, they add to the burden with which numismatists-students today must contend.

From the earliest era an unwritten commandment was recognized by the people, strictly forbidding the production of money inferior from the recognized standard, or counterfeits. T. Czackis mentions, as an example, that in Livonia death was the penalty for an admixture into monetary silver of even 1/16 part of meaner alloy. A similar structure governed in Lithuania. But we must declare that penalties are not everything: neither those who cast the silver, nor those whose task it was to test these "monies," had matured to such knowledge in chemistry. Articles cast of the pure metal came out cleanly. The person who had the responsibility for refining crude silver had problems! Without delving into earlier periods, even as late as the 14th century, castings with a purity of 0.900 were considered "very top-notch." At times, though very rarely, discoveries (with and without signs) have been found of much inferior silver. It is easy to understand the difficulties facing the ancients in the techniques of casting...

There was no central control over pre-coinage "monies" until the 14th century in Lithuania. Its traditional "standard" was enforced locally by persons

⁵² They are both described separately on page 197 and 202.

⁵³ a) LTSR History (page 48) the explanation "Lithuanian long chops, 11th-12th centuries" given under the castings with Gediminas' symbol, is not accurate, since in those centuries there were only the "Lithuanian long-kapos" but the Gediminas' symbol had not existed yet. b) Fedorov states that in the finds of cast money, the Knight symbol was pictured there "similar to that on coins" (Topografija", page 208). This confirms Figure 23, example 7, and also a stamp of a casting in my own collection (J.K.K.).

⁵⁴ Some interesting findings of Lithuanian kapos, counterstamped in east Slavic territory, were combined with other antiquities in the valuable numismatic collection of Egyptian King Farouk. A part of that collection, after the revolution in Egypt, came to the U.S.A.

interested. However, when Gediminas invited in foreign merchants, tradesmen and other specialists in economic life, and permitted not only businessmen but all travellers freely to navigate on the Nemunas, it followed logically that the time had arrived to place some kind of superintendence over the country's money. Who was the first, we do not know, but in the times of Gediminas' heirs, Algirdas and Kęstutis, it was in existence.⁵⁵ Judging from presently known discoveries, that superintendence confined itself to tests of coin metal only. It had not reached the stability of uniform cast "monies" and neither can we see any trace of government interference in the entire case money "system." We do know that the oncoming issue of coins by the heirs of Gediminas soon thrust "kapos" into disuse.

When we discussed Lithuania's pelt "monies," we mentioned that eastern Slavs later introduced similar currency and used them. Those "monies" of theirs, from the 12th century, were supplemented by silver castings. The very idea, and partly, the forms themselves were similar to the castings we are presently discussing. So Slavic writers, confusing the pelts, also confuse these monies of our forefathers with their own castings. However, similarity is not identity. The Slavs strive to evade this rule by silence. One of the more famous 19th century Russian numismatists, A.D. Čertkov, neutralizes this as follows: the confusion, in the middle ages, of the lands of the Lithuanians and Russians, and their disorganized contacts, must have had an influence upon the money of both sides.⁵⁶ But how those contacts influence the money of either side, and in which direction, from the east or from the west, we cannot look for impartiality in this author's works. And not only he, but an absolute majority of Slavic writers can not bear to recognize what one, a rarely objective Polish author, Dr. H. Paškevič, has perceived, that nearly all Russian history has been woven upon a general Lithuania history basket. So, like it or not, the old Slavs had plenty of opportunities to learn from the Lithuanians, and to appropriate.

From Mindaugas' time until the end of the middle ages, Slavic territory joined to Lithuania by war or otherwise, constituted about 0.9% of the entire area of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Coming into Lithuania at the same time as the subjugated Slavs, their language naturally enlarged the dictionary of "old monies." And when official Lithuanian records were written in the 14th century

⁵⁵Dr. A.T. Dzialynski, in his "Zbior praw litewskich", page 108. The symbol of Gediminas on the excavated kapos gives us a solid foundation to believe that Gediminas himself instituted the referred to supervision.

⁵⁶"Opisanie (drevnich) russkich monet", II pap. 1838, page 20.

in the so-called "White Russian Church Language," Lithuanian money names and terms were registered with a foreign pronunciation. Taking advantage of this, Slavic writers of the 19th and 20th centuries consciously confused the issue, so that at least now it would appear that their forefathers had influenced the Lithuanians, and not vice versa. This tendency is probably clearest in the field of ancient monies. However, which nation did lead? It is time to make that determination and we will attempt to do so here. If at some time, mother earth would yield more and clearer findings to science, our efforts could be supplemented.

Silver piece money in Lithuania, and later among the Slavs, in weight and shape over a long period, developed into certain "systems." The basic unit among the Lithuanians was the "kartis" (mane), with the Slavs, it was the "grivna." It was so, as with the pelt monies, since cast moneys came into use in close relationship with pelts, and for a long time, they were in use simultaneously. How the term "kartis" (mane) and "grivna" originated, we have already discussed. One additional fact must be added, that the Lithuanian silver "mane" equalled on pelt "mane." With the Slavs, because of a shortage of silver, their silver "grivna" was raised into 4 or more pelt "grivnas."

Let us glance at the weights of the cast "grivnas" and "manes." The famous Russophil, I.I. Kaufman, contends that the east Slav silver "grivna" weighted one pound (funt) or 96 "zolotnyks"⁵⁷ which, in the years of the metric pound, would equal about 410 grams. That of course, is bizarre. Until the 12th century, the Slavs had very little silver. Neither "Russian Truth" nor the "Nestor Chronicle" of the 11th century mentions it at all, while Levšinovski acknowledges openly that at that time, "silver was not to be found in Russia" (op. cit. V). The cast grivna of the Slavs is mentioned in sources there only in 1144. So we cannot accept seriously the weight of the grivna as Kaufman "finds", since: a) It is clearly too large for the start of the referred to monies; b) During the period of the Tatar occupation (13th to 15th centuries) it is absolutely impossible, since the Tatars seized silver from the Slavs by every possible means; c) it was established not historically, but under the psychological influence of modern weight units developed after many centuries.

Federov's suggestion is much more compelling when he says that the only silver monetary unit among the Russians (12th to 14th centuries) was the cast silver piece (grivna), a half pound, or 48 "zolotnyks" in weight. While in Kiev, the "grivna" weighed only about

⁵⁷"Russkij vies," S. Peterburg, 1906.

1 "zolotnyk" weighs about 4.27 grams.

36 "zlotnyks."⁵⁸ The part of a "grivna" cut in two is called a "rubl" (from the word "rublit" or "rubit" which means, "to chop or cleve"). But Fedorov also submits arguable conclusions. As an example, he believes that the Slavs' cast "grivna" was the same weight "from the 9th century," that is, he carries its introduction about 300 years farther back, when in reality it was first mentioned in the earliest Slavic sources only about the middle of the 12th century, as that same Russian author, Levšinovski proves (op. cit. VI). Since written records of the eastern Slavs began much earlier than the 12th century, surely the cast "silver grivna" would have been mentioned, if only it had existed in the 9th century. No, it did not exist at that time. At that time, the pelt "grivna" moneys ("grivna kun") had come into being, which tempted Fedorov among others to believe, that it was the same thing as the silver cast unit, which appeared much later.

Analysis of these silver pieces does not support either Kaufman's or Fedorov's weight of the "grivna." Levšinovski's conclusions agree with Fedorov's "48 zlotnyks," but such "grivnas" as are examined weigh about 195.184 grams, more or less, but never exactly a half pound "funt" or 48 "zlotnyks." Finally, Kiev's "grivna" weighed only about 36 "zlotnyks," while Černigov's: just barely about 32.

That is to say, we cannot speak categorically even about a half "grivna" of the Slavs. In addition, it was not standard or uniform among all the Slavs. Thus the suggestions of some Slavic writers that the Lithuanian "kartis" [mane] (similar to the "grivna" of the Slavs) originated "under the influence of the Russian "grivna," (as is possible to gather from Gumowski, or from the conclusions of that same Fedorov⁵⁹), have no foundation. Since the Lithuanian cast monies originated earlier than the Slavic, these latter should seek the truth here, by whom and whence came the knowledge to form their own cast "grivna." Why even the very forms of the Slavic "grivna" or "ruble" indicate that the concept of these their monies had passed to the eastern Slavic region from Lithuania! As, for example, Novograd, lying alongside Lithuania in the 12th century, began molding its cast monies similar to the Lithuanian (see Figure 21:1), while other sections, availing themselves of other concepts, cast their "grivna" and "rubles" in an entirely different form.

⁵⁸G.B. Fedorov: "Proischoždenie Moskovskioj monetnoj sistemy" and "Dengi Moskovskavo kniažestva..."

⁵⁹Lithuanian Numismatics;" "Klassifikacija litovskich slitkov i monet."

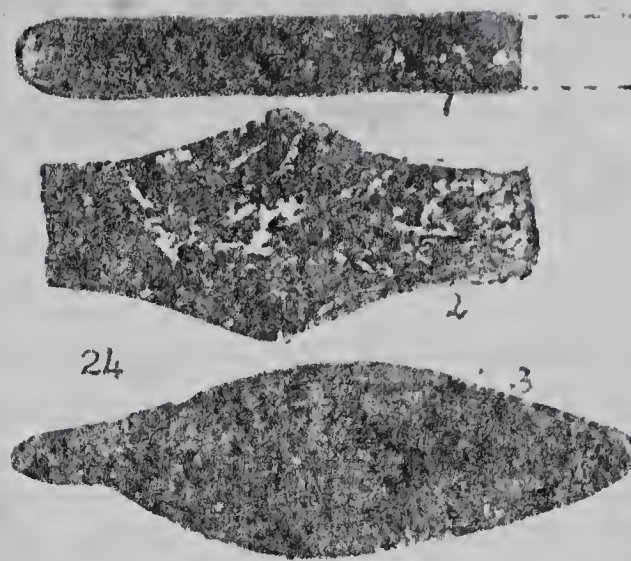


Figure 24: Eastern Slavic (Russian, 12th century) cast silver "grivnas". 1: Novograd. 2: Kiev. 3: Černigov types.

Unfortunately, in the 18th and 19th centuries, the Russians became very arrogant. Lithuania, which centuries ago had dominated them, now they say had "taught them absolutely nothing." and had always been a 'very primitive country.' Whatever she had: it wasn't indigenous, but had been borrowed from the Slavs. After the parceling of the Polish-Lithuanian Kingdom, on the broadened Russian empire's map, they contemptuously omitted even the name of Lithuania, and called that erstwhile enemy territory, as Russian arrogance dictated, the "northwest country." And not only in this matter did they exalt themselves (and continue to do so even now) in their nauseating minds, the Russians invented the airplane, radio, the internal combustion engine, refrigerators. They claim almost all the other more important breakthroughs of Western civilization. It doesn't affect them that everyone knows that at all times rays of universal enlightenment have shone into them, and not from them. So, part of the rays strained through Lithuania into eastern Slavia, and not the reverse.

We may pass with a smile this posturing of the Slavs against the West. However, we must return once again to the influence of civilization upon both the Lithuanians and the Slavs. It is recorded both in Lithuanian history and in that of the Slavs themselves, that in the middle ages and later, Lithuania governed tremendous stretches of eastern Slavic country, which their more objective writers ever term "Lithuanian Russia." That in itself should rightly temper the fierce Slavic panegyric, as to who possessed

the overwhelming potential of bringing on or another triumph of its civilization to the other, to exhibit one or other of its creative examples. To the unbiased student of the past, there can not be the slightest doubt, that occupying zone after zone of land inhabited by Slavs, and dominating them, Lithuanians had the unquestioned opportunity of implanting there many practical procedures, which they already possessed; and in that manner, disclose their own means of exchange, money. In the same manner, as used by the Romans in their occupied territories. In those days, the colonizers were in a certain sense "teachers." Certainly not the colonized, who defended themselves, hid and ran, secreting whatever they possessed from the occupiers. That was especially evident in the earliest Lithuanian-Slav contacts, when the Lithuanians stormed into the east with naked arms, with no diplomatic intervention. And what could the Lithuanians then learn from the eastern Slavs or acquire? While the Slavs, in the words of their own Chronicle writers, led a wild life, like animals, surviving in their forests like beasts, attacking and slaying one another by force, or by guile snatching maidens for breeding purposes, eating every disgusting food...⁶⁰ Anyone interested can verify these facts in the Nestor and Kiev Chronicles Nestoriada, written in the 11th and 12th centuries period. (The author died 1114). Therefore, whoever attempts to show that cast monies (or even worse--pelt monies) were received "well-done" by the Lithuanians from the Slavs, demonstrates a complete disregard of the truth.⁶¹

How completely this disregard is based upon ill will, one particular example will show us: a descendant of certain disreputability, Vitebski boyars, considered a sound historian by not only Russians, but even in Lithuania, I. Lappo, in one of his "tractates" contends without blushing that the entire military system in Lithuania during the middle ages, including the castles and their fortification, maintenance of their garrisons, taxes, etc., were almost entirely, from a to z built upon...Slavic models!⁶² So why talk about the "models" for Lithuanian money of that period!

⁶⁰ See H. Paszkiewicz "The Origin of Russia," page 41. The discussion there is about those same eastern Slav tribes, with whom Lithuanians first came in contact.

⁶¹ However, you cannot hide an awl in a bag. It shows in Levšinovski's volume, where we find two diametrically opposing conclusions. It seems that entire tribes (Novograd, Smolensk, Vitebsk, Polock and others) did not offer to others their archaic "money" systems, but have accepted and used domestically and entire line of media of exchange used elsewhere, including those from Lithuania: first, kapos, later, the earliest coins ("peniazi"); See "Opyt istorija..." Page VII, VIII, and others.

⁶² "Zapadn. Rossiya i jej sojedinienie s Polšeju.," Prague, 1924, page 96.

We cannot believe that he did not know that all these practices in Lithuania were original and their own. And if the Lithuanians of the middle ages learned anything from afar, it would be fair to call to mind not the semi-savage "teachers" from the east, but the civilized Crusaders [Teutonic Knights], as we see in documents⁶³ established by the Pole V. Kamieniecki, who does not cater to the Russians.

However, the Lithuanians prospered, creating progress in well-isolated solitude using their own native "models" for many centuries, even before the advent of the Crusaders to their vicinity. If they had awaited for strange "models," they would undoubtedly have vanished; either frozen, or starved, or killed by the approaching Slavs or Crusaders, hunted down one by one. So in place of their illustrious history, there might have come down to Mr. Lappo only a trivial legend, an unclear tradition... But even that fact, that the comparatively small Lithuanian nation managed to impose its will upon the largest areas of Slavic population, should impress the mind of Lappo and other "historians" similar to him, that Lithuania had a great treasury of its own culture, its own energy, and its own "models." The Slavic country to the north of the Pripiet, which was closest to Lithuania "did not have a high standard of culture, and had no political traditions worthy of note," generalized Dr. H. Paškevičius,⁶⁴ the well-known scholar of this region's history. The period is the 13th and 14th centuries. Whence and what Slavic "models" could have been adopted by the Lithuanians? That is to say, the acknowledged "historian" Lappo, enamoured of his panslavism, was unable to separate himself from his "brothers," the earlier tellers of fairytales, to whom, of course, secondary issues had priority over scientific work, the objective truth, from a to z.⁶⁵

⁶³"Wplywy zakonne na ustroj litewski" (Przeglad Historyczny, 1925). V. 160.

⁶⁴"The Origin of Russia, " page 240

⁶⁵The words of Dostojewski's daughter Amada echo in our ears typically: "No other country has done as much for Slavic civilization as tiny Lithuania. Other nations work for themselves, for their own glorification. Lithuania scattered its words of wisdom among its neighbors. Poland, the Ukraine and Russia do not understand this, and are not thankful. However, there will come a day when they will clearly see its gigantic debt to modest and quiet Lithuania." (From P. Babickas' "Picturesque Lithuania," Chicago, 1958, page 34).

Up until now, nearly 60 hoards of our Lithuanian monies have been unearthed, at least described or mentioned. Some of these hoards were meager,⁶⁶ so any conclusions drawn from them cannot always be grouped easily. Other hoards have supplied science with tens and even hundreds of examples.⁶⁷ The Russian numismatic-investigator A.A. Iljinas⁶⁸ attempted to describe single hoards. Nearly all his lists and many data were published by G.B. Fedorov about 10 years ago in Russian, and in 1951 into Lithuanian.⁶⁹ In this volume, 53 hoards are mentioned with only Lithuanian cast monies, and 3 hoards with cast monies and coins. The hoards with castings only tell us unequivocally that they were buried before the appearance of foreign coins in Lithuania from the 9th and 10th centuries. Thus, they were produced earlier, and were circulated here before those coins. In the hoards with castings and coins found from the 10th to the 14th centuries, we find foreign coins and 14-15th century Lithuanian "monies." In addition to all that, in some of the hoards were found ancient Lithuanian treasures (necklaces, silver bracelets, earrings, broaches, chains) and our forefathers archaic "monies:" neckpieces.

The hoards involved are spread over much territory, from Livonia to the Ukraine, from the Baltic Sea to the deep interior of Russia. Since silver at all times had intrinsic value, we are quite sure that much of these hoards' money "melted" in their finders' hands, and we shall know nothing of that ever.

From the hoards that have been discovered so scattered, it is evident that cast Lithuanian money in its time circulated around all the largest Lithuanian centers: Vilnius, Kaunas, Gardinas, Smolensk, Starodub, and left its imprint all about, not excepting Russian and Ukrainian country at one time belonging to Lithuania, and wherever its political and economic influence carried it. Fedorov has established four basic movements of Lithuanian cast silver from central Lithuania: I: into Livonia; II: to north Russia (Novograd); III: into Tver's environs; IV: to Ukraine (Kiev). Actually, even an SSSR scientist had to acknowledge that the Lithuanian

⁶⁶Most of the hoards contained from 1 to several castings.

⁶⁷For example, in Draugeliškis (Dusetų region) in 1934 were found 21, and in Grybiškis (Vilnius region) in 1930, several hundred silver kapos were unearthed.

⁶⁸"Topografija kladov serebrianyh i zolotych slitkov," Peterburg, 1921.

⁶⁹See "The topography of hoards with Lithuanian castings and coins" a work conjoined with "Works of the Lithuanian Historical Institute," I, 181-228, Vilnius, 1951.

kapas in its day, moved into east Slavic country, and not the Slavic "grivnas" or "rubles" into Lithuania. We must add that of the known 56 hoards with Lithuanian castings, about 40 were located in Belorussia (white russia), Russian, and Ukrainian territory, while on the other hand, Slavic castings were found in Lithuania in only a few hoards. Glancing at the old Russian Chronicles (for example, Sophias, Hipatius) one can obtain an imposing image of how the Slavs evaluated "Lithuanian silver" (litovskoje serebro), how they desired it, and how widely they utilized it in practice.

A bright beam of light was cast upon the subject we are considering here, "monies," by the large hoard found in 1930 near Vilnius (about 400 castings) by the Lithuanian, Paul Karazija.⁷⁰ Combining his discoveries with those earlier found, we can first boldly assert that all ancient Lithuanian money castings found until now, from the standpoint of weight, fall into two clearly separate groups: I: the lighter ones, whose general average is close to 100 grams; II: the heavier ones, weighing separately about twice as much. It is understandable that the weights of separate castings are not uniform. Especially the lighter ones vary widely in weight (a general characteristic of old money), but they do not vary too much from the average, 100 and 200 grams. For example, Karazija finds from the Vilnius hoard an average from the lighter group of about 104.7 grams. For the heavier group, about 195.4 grams. Fedorov, grouping all known findings, places the average of the first group of castings at about the same (about 104.4 gr.) while the second group's average he finds a few grams higher. In a general summary, Fedorov is inclined to operate with these averages: the lighter castings "about 100-104 gr.). The heavier, about 200-208 gr."⁷¹

The discoveries of the first group of castings are most numerous. Therefore, they were produced the most. The greatest variation of weight was noted in this group. Karazija reports finds decreasing by degrees to 73.85 grams, and rising to over a hundred, to 114.3 gr. One even weighed 134.6 gr. In other hoards single castings were found even lighter than Karazija's (60, even to 50 gr.). However, findings of extreme weight differential could have been irregulars, such castings could have been reduced from larger units, chopping off a piece of silver to make a smaller payment. Karazija noted upon them

⁷⁰ See "The 1930 Vilnius Hoard," published in the "Lithuanian Nation" Book IV, section 3, Vilnius, 1932.

⁷¹ "Topografija..." Page 191-192.

vestiges of an outside agency "stands out like the teeth of a mammoth"). Finally, some of them could have been parts of silver neckpieces, residue from ornaments reworked into money pieces, which in later ages unquestionably was the practice.

The variety of the normal castings of the first group, and their noticeable diversity in weight testify to us that these castings belong to the beginning of our subject, "monies." These castings, as is easy to imagine, had their start by chance, and developed out of "chaos." At the beginning, no one knew how to produce them properly, and no one knew with what weight to endow them. Beyond that, silver was scarce --it appeared in the land in comparatively limited quantities. So, when the first (unfortunately, an unknown) beginner endeavored to cast his stock of silver (ornaments, ornamentations, some coins) in a convenient piece for a specific purpose, he melted what he had into what he could. That is to say, the casting was done purely haphazardly. Following him, other castings for a while would have been similar in idea. For the weight to stabilize required much time and practical experience.

After finding the average weight of the lighter and the heavier castings, numismatists began a search for a weight unit existing somewhere and at some time accepted in Lithuania, into which these castings could be fitted. Some students recalled the Koenigsburt (Old Prussian) measure and attempted to tie in the larger, less varying in weight castings. Others proposed the Iraq pound ("rotli"), or its parts, alleged to have reached Lithuania in the 9th-10th centuries by way of the Arabian dirhem.⁷² They and others were in error. The Koenigsburg measure appeared only in the 13th century, so it is several centuries too late for the Lithuanian castings. Further, its proponents are unable to say how much in grams this measure weighed.⁷³ And we cannot seriously attempt to consider the influence of the dirhem's weight upon the castings. If our earliest castings had developed in conjunction with some stable standard, known in advance, especially a standard involving monetary weights, undoubtedly they would have been formed more uniformly, and not fluctuating one from the other by changes of 30 to 40 grams! To our knowledge, when the Arabian coins (dirhems and others) appeared in Lithuania, the cast monies already existed in the country. So it had to be that the unknown, unreadable Arabian coins had to adjust themselves in real value in exchange to the cast monies, and not the opposite.

⁷²This theory is urged by Fedorov, basing it upon A.K. Markov's "Topografija.." (published in 1910).

⁷³For example, Czackis contends it to be about 196 gr. Braun, about 191.3 gr. Kirmis, 189.9 gr. Others indicate still differing weights. (See Gumowski's "Lithuanian Numismatics", page 25.

We are confident that the weight system of the dirhem was unknown to anyone in Lithuania at the time, and there was no method available to describe it.

To conclude, the ancient Lithuanian silver casting developed and approached its average weight (about 100 and 200 gr.) with no external, known in advance, weight standard. After examining the entire matter, one arrives at the vivid impression that those castings, thrust into circulation and beginning their task of exchange function, had first of all to align themselves with the existing local "monies" current in the country, by which the public until then and currently judged everything in their economic transactions. And we know already that those "monies" were marten pelts. So the original silver castings, to facilitate their acceptance in circulation, had to adjust their exchange value at somewhere near the worth of an arbitrary number of pelt "monies." How long this adjustment process lasted, we do not know. But let us say, that it becomes clearly evident that the lighter type (the earlier) casting equalized itself to a half pelt kartis (mane), while the heavier one (developed later) took its place as an entire kartis. [That is, 1/2 kartis equalled a "short kapos", while a whole pelt unit of 40 equalled a long kapos]

The older neckpieces, it would seem, had no influence on the development of castings.⁷⁴ They were always regarded, first and foremost, as ornaments, so when needed for use in exchange, they were fixed according to the "psychological value" of the individual owner. With respect to the silver neckpieces, which began to be produced in Lithuania from the earliest silver imports into the country (they are found in graves of people of the 3rd and 4th century A.D.), they were far removed from any one of the domestic "money units." See, for their production far and very far away uneven quantities of metal were used, and differing amounts of work and soul were employed for ornamentation. So at all times, they were not valued uniformly and never reached any equality with either the pelt or cast money units. When castings became current, if needed, they were converted into "money" only by chopping them into proper parts, or melting them with all their ornamentation into recognized castings.⁷⁵

⁷⁴ Its basic role in this field ended with the development of the pelt "money" combined unit.

⁷⁵ This entire process is described summarily by Prof. V. Jurgutis as follows: "Our ancient ornament, worn on the neck...becomes a staff of a certain amount of silver." ("Money," page 55.).

Neither unmarked, nor marked and/or stamped, the cast silver monies discussed here did not attest of themselves their mineral qualities in exchange, so that almost from their inception the need arose to test their excellence at the time of the exchange. The easiest manner in which to test silver is to uncover its oxidation. Marks observed on discoveries witness that the public was able to uncover it, even with their teeth: by biting they could feel the metal's softness, they could see its glowing brightness--it was silver.... For a deeper examination of the casting, it was chipped [chop marks] , as we in the photographs. After a lengthy course in circulation, an entire row of chips appeared in the castings. In some of the discoveries, we have counted as many as 15. When "small change" was needed, a section of definite value was cut from the castings, or at the place of the chipped spot, it was disjoined some other way, so those pieces would automatically increase. Business operations were handled with pieces of chopped cast silver "money" , as mentioned in the Chronicles and known to examiners. It is believed that from this chopping (as much from testing the silver as in cutting pieces off), Lithuanian monetary castings in their time were called KAPOŠ [Literally: "chops"], from the Lithuanian word, "kapoti [Lit: "to cut"]:" Earlier it seems, it was spelled "kapati." As kapos, they are still known to science Today⁷⁶.

In some discoveries in the kapos are found incisions, very similar one to another, which seems to suggest that this was done not in circulation and by differing tools, but at the same time and with the same tool. Karaziņa observes in his "Vilnius Hoard" that these incisions could have been some sort of recording signs, figures or some particular writing. Now, symbols and figures to one who has seen a series of discoveries must be passed without explanation. We may say that so far as writing is concerned, we should look only for Lithuanian calligraphy on Lithuanian money, our own script. However, Prof. Vaclovas Biržiška in his "History of Ancient Lithuanian Books" (1953) categorically denies the existence of any writing in pagan Lithuania. That means that the "incisions" on the kapos were never any form of writing. Similarly, when we find kapos sticks [Lit: "chopsticks"] of Lithuanian furworkers with incisions, those cuts are of a purely mechanical nature, strewings of personal memos, but not ideas. They could be

⁷⁶ Some writers call the Lithuanian kapos "strikes." That, of course, is a misunderstanding. Their basis was not a struck item, but poured money. Pieces found in the discovered hoards of "struck silver" were manually chopped from neckpieces and adjusted to monetary castings or their parts for purposes of circulation. "Struck pieces" in Lithuania are those large silver coins (talers, guldens, or our 16th century "half-kapos"). They were so called even in the 18th and 19th centuries, when the poured kapos had long been forgotten.

repeated. As we have seen, the kapa production was mostly centralized. Uniform and evenly spaced incisions, where they are found, could have been done at markets to make change easier. Perhaps a silver piece separated with one incision equalled, let us say, a certain part of a pelt kartis [mane] an "x" number of pelts. About very similar incisions we might even consider that they had been made by special silver assayers. Or even that those incisions are vestiges of governmental control, which we have mentioned earlier. We will never learn all the details. Life went its way and ancient man worked as he could, how given those conditions of life, it was easier or better.

In the period 9th to 11th centuries, Lithuanian exchange (trade) with foreign countries became noticeably livelier and more widespread. In addition to businessmen from neighboring countries, active merchants from distant Arabia reached Lithuania. More and more silver came into the country (coins, ornaments, scrap). The cast kapos clearly divide into two classes: the lighter, and the heavier which was twice the weight. The heavier, spurred on by the demands of commerce, stabilize in the measure of local silver weight, and incidentally confirm the basic position of the cast "money" unit.

That unit, as we have seen, weighed about 200 grams. Why was that particular weight established, which does not harmonized with any weight in the ancient west? After a thorough analysis of the matter, we reach the conclusion that it could not have been otherwise, since the unit under discussion developed and matured equalizing itself to its local predecessor: the "pelt kartis." But since that earlier kartis had no weight measure, the weight of the silver casting was set at a point dictated in one way or another by the agreed current value in exchange of two comparative objects.

When the general designation to describe cast money as kapa became current, the old lighter casting became "small kapa." Later the larger (heavier) unit was formulated as "the long kapa." Paul Karazija also differentiates them so. But we must not misconstrue this, that the long kapa was always longer than the short kapa. We find, it is true, some much longer, but generally, there is no rule here. We find the small kapos and the long kapos of varying length, measuring in the majority of cases between 10 and 15 centimeters, but the weight depends upon the thickness.

There remains a codicil, the casting of the heavier type displaced the combined (basic) unit of the pelt kartis, and naturally, it inherited the name of its predecessor as well. As in general with money, it could be and

was the long kapa. As the basic unit for new money (and even the measure of silver weight) it had to be "kartis" (mane). Since the long kapos grew out of the earlier established pelt kartis to which it was compared, it took its place in use, and finally, replaced it.

As commerce with foreign countries spread, two entirely different metal money systems clashed in Lithuania: the local cast kapa, and foreign struck coins. With both systems in active circulation, the need for an auxiliary term became apparent, to describe in one way or another, at least their perceptible differences. When this occurred, we do not know, but in the sources of the late middle ages and of modern times we find indications that for a general characterization of the kapa, the term "long kapa" came into use (shortened, it was known only as the "long", according to Levšinovski, the eastern Slavs pronounced theirs "dolgeji") a quite, a quite picturesque contrast to "burnished" money, for the struck coins.

Later, with changing conditions, more appropriate names followed, driving the older into oblivion, as customarily happens. For example: Jogaila, in his non-Lithuanian letter to Vytautas (1417), called the long kapa a "siklas." From the times of Algirdas, under the influence of the White Russian language encroaching into Lithuania, and with the diffusion of Russian monies in circulation, the kapa was even termed in speech and writing: the long kapa as a ruble. The short kapa as a half-ruble (in coin money, the ruble was subdivided into 100 parts). At times, clerics from the pulpit would compare the kapa to the biblical "talents." Simon Daukantas, in his work "Budas" [Character] has even termed them "etchings." Finally, one writer for the Lithuanian Encyclopedia [Dr. Alexander M. Račkus, without the knowledge of Karys, who was the editor of the numismatic section] (Vol. VIII), transformed the kapa into "long groschen."

It is unnecessary to explain that "long money," "long ones," "siklas," "ruble," "half-ruble," "talent," represent purely arbitrary ideas explaining the difference between cast and modern money, when there was the need to more graphically describe these monies in the currenty confusion of tongues in Lithuania. Such ideas neither build nor destroy the original kapa lexicon. But the same cannot be said about "etchings" or "long groschen," since these nouns carry back centuries into antiquity with no reason, with no basis, and have the tendency as if to "baptize anew" old things. There is no need for discussion: "etchings" with Daukantas came about without any study of the kapa, while the "long groschen" [of Dr. Alexander M. Račkus] is a characteristic fruit of dialetantism in numismatics since, in a word in those days, when our forefathers found, nurtured, matured and finally "christened" the kapa,

their cast money, (no item in use for centuries in this world would go without a name) there was no groschen, and neither had the word been heard and no one any place had either seen or heard of it.

But the Slavic authors of the 19th and 20th centuries provoked the worst havoc on the short kapa lexicon. There they not only ignored or hid the fact that these monies had ever been Lithuanian, originated in Lithuania and were native, but the long kapa or "kartis" was absolutely melted into the Russian "grivna," and the short kapa into the "ruble." (Confusing their own "grivna" and "ruble" in their writings, the authors frequently confound the long kapa with the "ruble."). Caught in these snares, some of our own authors gave the franchise to "grivna" even in Lithuanian articles, making it "Lithuanian" (as much as possible) as "grivine" or "grivina."....

Broader inquiries, however, had clearly demonstrated something entirely different, and have negated these Slavic proclivities. We have already discussed how and when the long kapa was born in Lithuania, if it, let us say, matured to its fullest for even a hundred years. Nevertheless, the Slavic "grivna" casting is more recent, since the latter came into being only in the 12th century (it being first mentioned in ancient Slavic records in 1144).⁷⁷ Carefully scanning Russian numismatic literature, we find that the grivna was transformed into "rubles" in the second half of the 13th century, and the ruble itself was first mentioned in ancient Slavic Chronicles in 1317.⁷⁸ Thus, is it necessary to further demonstrate that the "ruble" (and its half-part) appeared in Slav-ia several centuries later than the beginning and maturing of the Lithuanian small kapa? And further, a large number of Russian authors "did not notice" that Slavic cast "monies" never equalled metrologically the Lithuanian. Kapa went its way, and the "grivna" and "ruble" their own way, so they all had their individual names.

We must emphasize that the Slavic silver castings deteriorated so much at the end that even the Slavs, in turning to coins, could not use them as a measure of monetary value (for example, Moscow and Riazane based their coins upon the Tatars; Tvere, from the stable base of Lithuanian monetary metal.)⁷⁹

⁷⁷ Levšinovski, page VI, 8, 36

⁷⁸ Same, page IX; Fedorov: "Proischoždnie moskovskoj monetn sistemy" (Kratk. Soobšč SVI, 1947; Chaudoir: "Obozrenije russk. Meneg," Page 104.

⁷⁹ Fedorov: "Russkije monety udeln. Perioda" (Kratk. Soobšč XVII, 1947.

In another hoard, discovered later, were found many silver castings smaller than the small kapa, which tempted some to think that Lithuanians in antiquity might have cast not only kapos, but some of their segments. However, the irregular weight of the described pieces, for example, 36, 50, 60 grams, affords no foundation for such conclusions. And their technical production results are not the same as real kapos. It is our belief that these pieces are sectors or fractions of normal kapos, as we have already discussed. Those discoveries that are much lighter than normal kapos, might have been made into pieces, fitting exchange needs, from light silver brooches, bracelets.

No positive explanation has been available for the so-called "golden kapa" which one or another of our leading excavators venture to touch upon; there are no concrete facts. The most tempting discoveries of "golden kapa" are: in 1903, found in a hoard coming out of Mogilev province, and the other dug up in 1934 in Draugeliškis: neither of which resemble the kapa. Another thing, the first weighs 78.287 gr, the second, a bare 28.613 gr. From this disparate size alone we may conclude that here the discussion relates to an ordinary, fortuitous piece of gold, having nothing to do with our kapa. Further, in the early stages of cast silver kapos, Lithuanians had no gold. Later, when that metal appeared in the country, it was used in exchange as it was (in coin, in pieces, in any ornamental shape). A golden kapa would have been a very substantial monetary unit. In the economy of those days, that type of kapa would have to be chopped up into almost microscopic parts....

The cast silver "monies" in ancient Lithuania were not so plentiful as to be available to all inhabitants, as was the case with pelts. So they were generally handled by rulers, prominent people, by boyars on their estates, by local and foreign merchants. A full kapa seldom was seen in the homes of the peasant, the tradesman, or the hireling. To accumulate more than an entire kapa was feasible only to economically wealthy persons. Professor Vladas Jurgutis [1885-1966, the first president of the Bank of Lithuania] has computed (according to the 14th century ratio of gold and silver value) the kapa could have been worth about 125 lits (1938) [1 Lithuanian lit was worth about 16 U.S. cents in 1938], but its purchasing power would have been "incomparably greater than the current sum of 125 lits."⁸⁰ [a worker's weekly wage was around 30 lits]

⁸⁰ "Money," page 57. There he adds that the kapa was a very large sum of money. However, of course it was not that fantastically large, as alleged in the Lithuanian Encyclopedia (VIII, 400) that for one "long groschen (as the LE misnames the kapa, still another mendacity [of the Dr. Alexander M. Račkus]) that in the days of Vytautas it could have purchased "240 bushels of rye"!

In the second half of the 14th century the first coins came out in Lithuania. Together with the well-known Czech groschen which somewhat earlier had begun to circulate in Lithuania, they began the epoch of modern coins in Lithuania. The kapos approached their final dissolution. However, the ancient silver casting, tried through centuries and always an undisputed value, was in no hurry to bow out to coins. And this is understandable because: coins, first of all, were a new form; to become accustomed to them would require much time for the people. Second, the coins of that time did not exhibit either stability of content nor an accurate interrelationship. In addition, such "thin" foreign coins that came into the country were easy to bend, even in the fingers of a child. But the kapos always remained the same: in content and in purchasing power they retained a stable level. It thus was not accidental, according to Russian Annals, that the Tatar Chan Timur Kutluk, at the end of the 14th century, having laid siege to Kiev, demanded ransom payment specifically in Lithuanian silver castings! In all of eastern Europe, the kapos were renowned as the strongest silver medium of exchange. The White Russians, the Russians, the Tatars, the Poles, the Crusaders, and the Old Prussians all regarded them highly. So it is not surprising that in Lithuania, they faded by degrees, became scarcer, but were tolerated long after coins were available, until the 16th and 17th centuries, when they finally ended their long existence.

Most of the kapos in their declining days, went into silver furnaces and later became coins. The remainder became scattered, were lost. A part, by design or not, were buried in the ground where today they are discovered at random.

The majority of discoveries affirm that the kapos did not contract the plague of cheap money, which in the middle ages, depressed so many states and countries. Not only in word but in its entire content, the kapa remained a kapa. Likewise, history will also mention the reborn Lithuanian [20th century] state's Lit [the monetary unit of modern independent Lithuania] as practically the only currency of modern ages, which retained its value through all its existence [1922-1940], the same standard as it began. [1 lit equaled 0.150462 grams of pure gold].

We have heard from foreign numismatists, as if it were a fault, that ancient Lithuanian primitive money held on to its function for too long. And it is true, looking back into the past, during which the Lithuanian nation has shown so much energy and creativity, and has accomplished such

tremendous exploits in all phases of life. It would seem to some most unusual that it moved so slowly to modern money. However, no one who knows the cause of this lingering will accuse the Lithuanians of slackened progress. Among those conditions the Lithuanians created, united, fought and lived, there were always other calamities, much more important in those days than money. Their most important problem was to keep beneath their feet their bread-producing mother earth and to preserve the freedom which they recognized with such astounding clarity. For those two ideals Lithuanians fought fiercely and unremittingly. And in those battles, the plow, the ax, the javelin and sword in their gnarled hands won for them nearly everything. Perhaps it was for this reason alone that our forefathers remained free in their own land for thousands of years and built such a tremendous history for their nation, at which we stand forever amazed!

So, we can now understand, why our greyhaired ancestors looked upon methods of exchange as an item of secondary importance. They were adequately satisfied with "monies" of one kind or another, so long as the light of freedom shone upon them; so long as their tilled fertile land, their waters full of fish, their forests replete with animals, and hard work assured them of a plentiful existence. So long as they stamped triumphant through the lands of the eastern Slavs, creating a larger nation, powerful and safe. Finally, an observer looking attentively can realize without a doubt that these primitive "monies" of ancient Lithuania were not the very worst in all Europe. Why, those same Germans, calling themselves "culture-bearers," even in the 10th century A.D. traded with oxen "money." In the early (10th to 13th centuries) coins of the Poles there was no system, so essentially, they did not differentiate from Lithuanian pelt money. The Swedes even in the 17th century used such "modern" money that a \$10 copper "coin" had to be carried to market in a wagon: it weighed about 20 kilograms...⁸¹ Well, such "better" monies in mankind's history could be counted by decades. While glancing through the Lithuanian kapos, both friend and foe must acknowledge without a doubt that they, especially during the final centuries of their existence, were in many respects an improvement over a series of other modern currencies, and most importantly, more trustworthy.

⁸¹R. Thomsen: "Verdens tungeste och verdens letteste penge" ("Sparegrisen," Vol. 25, No. 1, 1956.).

4. Foreign Money in Old Lithuania

a) coins of various epochs and countries.

Aside from their own primitive "monies," Lithuanians from of old have seen, recognized and frequently used entire series of foreign coins which reached the country in the course of exchanges from Rome, Macedonia, Greece and its colonies around the Black Sea, Asia Minor,⁸² Bizantium, Arabia and from Europe of the middle ages. Baltic amber first attracted foreign merchants. Later, selected hides of small animals; the renowned Lithuanian honey, wax and other special treasures followed. There is trustworthy evidence indicating that ancient Greek coins found scattered throughout Lithuanian territory are the very first to have appeared here, before the birth of Christ and the beginning of the A.D. era, when Greek and Etruscan merchants avidly sought amber, as much for themselves and as representatives of traders from colonies along the Black Sea (Phanagoria, Chersonesus, Panticapea). Coins of other countries reached Lithuania at later periods.

True, not many of these foreign coins have been located, but that is understandable. There was no massive trading in those days. Part of this income was spent on the purchase of foreign merchandize. A goodly portion of the coins undoubtedly was used in the production of neckpieces and other ornaments (among other items we find silver and gold coins with hooks attached to be pinned to clothing), and to start the poured kapos. However, the fact of these discoveries clearly indicates that the native heath of our forefathers in the dim past was not a "terra incognita", even to the most distant traders of early civilization.

Roman coins are the more numerous finds in Lithuania. In explaining them, archaeologists and historians of the 19th century were even apt to conjecture the old story

⁸⁹The renowned archaeologist A. Tatur made a beginning in the study of these foreign coins found in historical Lithuanian parts. See his "Očerki archeologičeskich pamiatnikov Minskoj guberniji," Minsk, 1892. Though the author confines his work to the province of Minsk, his accumulated results nevertheless shed at least a relative picture in the neighboring Lithuanian areas.

of the rise of the Lithuanian nation from the Romans (or at least, from some Gallic branch) could be accepted as a historical fact.⁸³ For upon some denariai could be recognized the fractional word "LIT," from which students might easily reach the conclusion that this "LIT" meant "Litavicus" (or Litavorus), the supposed "father" of the Lithuanian nation, who came with him men into the Baltic region and there "found" the future Lithuania...(The root of these stories reaches back several centuries to adorn the fantasies of boyars inclined to dress themselves in strange feathers.). And the author Kirkoras, composing a small volume about those denariai with the "LIT," transformed them into the oldest of pagan Lithuania's coins.⁸⁴

Of course, science has filtered out all such unnecessary stories. Roman coins appeared in Lithuania's countryside, not brought in by some "Litavorus," but swept along the channels of trade, as they did everywhere else, wherever the Romans (or some of their associates) had ever traded. Now, that romantically sounding three-letter word "LIT" most probably means "Lucius Itius," the Roman Mint's director or moneyer (he is known to numismatists). It still could be that the "LIT" has some other meaning, but today no one doubts that those coins were foreign to Lithuanians.

Roman coins predominated in Lithuania at the turn of the 2nd and 3rd centuries after Christ, but some are found that are older and some, more recent. T. Narbutas mentions a denar of Antonius Pius⁸⁵ found in the Samogitian [Low-land] region. Trajan's coins have been detected in Gabrioliškis (Vilnius region). Faustina's coins have been unearthed in the Šiauliai District.⁸⁶ A hoard, found in the vicinity of Daugpilis [Latvia], consists of 34 roman coins with dates of issue from Augustus to Constantine the Great (other findings in Latvia, and from the standpoint of locale, continue on to the vicinity of Klaipėda).⁸⁷ The volume of copper coins in these discoveries far outweighs the silver coins. Dr. J. Puzinas found 16 Roman sesterces at Kurmaičiai (Kretinga District). They relate to these Roman leaders: Trajan (98-117 A.D.), Antonius Pius (138-161); Faustina I (died 141); Mark Anthony (161-180); Faustina II (died 175), and Severus Alexander (beginning of the 3rd century.)⁸⁸

⁸³From V. Jurgutis' "Money," page 52

⁸⁴"Monetnoje delo v Litve"

⁸⁵"Dzieje starożytne narodu litewskiego" (Int. III)

⁸⁶"Wiadomości Numismat. Archeologiczne," Cracow, 1919, pages 199 and 1897, page 268.

⁸⁷Arnolds Spekke: "The Ancient Amber Routes," page 76.

⁸⁸"A grave of the early Iron Age" (Annual of the Vytautas the Great Museum, I, 1941).

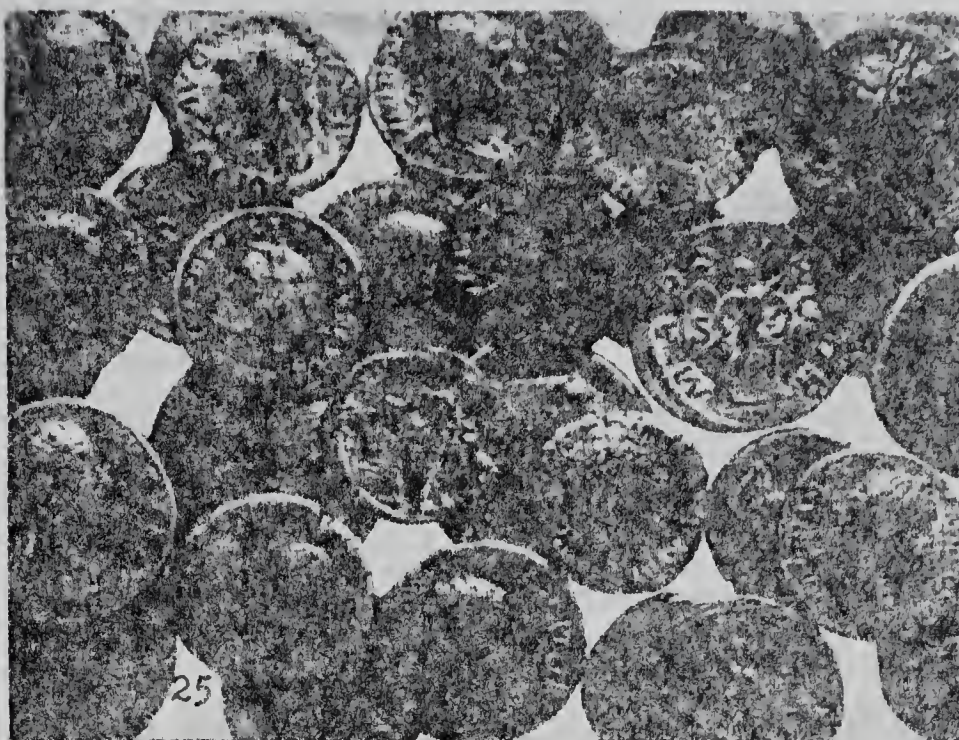


Figure 25. One of the more numerous hoards of Roman coins, found in the habitat of ancient Balts.

Judging from these (and more) discoveries, we must believe that trade relations between the Lithuanians and Romans expanded and lasted from the 1st to the 4th centuries A.D. After this, the migration of nations cut off all ties between the Lithuanians and Romans. The massive fluctuation of peoples, their instability, the uncertainty of Europe for several centuries, deeply affected the wide region between the Baltic and Black seas. The Balts (our forefathers among them) did not participate in this massive movement of peoples, but they, nevertheless, were affected by these migrations; let us say, they were driven to the north. The Roman Empire fell. In its place Byzantium arose in the 8th century, with its "impregnable capital" of Constantinople on the Bosphorus.

Those coins which reached Lithuania from without, before the time of the displacement of nations, were only the beginning. After the shifting of nations had been completed, European merchants became active. Arabians began heading northward. Foreign money again began to flow into the Baltic region. However, in addition to foreign coins, which were never too plentiful, our forefathers were compelled to utilize, for domestic

trading, material "monies," and paid out foreign coins only on special occasions, when it was necessary to deal with foreigners. We believe that even in these times, a majority of silver coins were melted and became Lithuanians' piece money kapos, which even then were stubbornly driving from circulation other local exchange methods.

Special attention of scholars is drawn to the Arabs' activity in the 8th and 9th centuries. They had created a cordon of states in central and western Asia, and as early as the 8th century, they were engaged energetically in winning the trade markets of Europe, beginning of course, with the nearest countries, the Caucasus and beyond it. Arabian caravans swung out from Samarkand and Chivas along the lower Volga, and from there began to compete further up the continent's northwestern flank. After long succession of years, this commercial surge broke through to the Baltic sea, overrunning the land of Lithuania through the Prussians, since even there (at Elbing and Danzig) Arabian dirhems have been found.⁸⁹ At this time, foreign traders were attracted here, among other prized



Figure 26. Examples of Arabian coins found in Lithuania

⁸⁹For further details, see Schwandt's "Westpreussische Muenzfunde" and Gumowski's "Szkice."

items, by the specially costly animal pelts. They were eagerly sought, and high prices were paid for them. Local inhabitants received linen, cloth, veils, other merchandize, silver products or scrap, and of course, Arabian coins.

In Slavic numismatic literature, these Arabian coins are often called Kuphos coins, supposedly because they were struck in Kuphos (near the Euphrates River). In fact however, not many of them came from there. A great many of the coins were struck in the capitals of the heads of the dynasties of Bagdad, Samarkand and other Abasidids and Samanidids, which can be checked from their inscriptions and legends.

Excavations produced not only whole coins, but also some chopped in nearly equal parts: halves, quarters. They were divided to ease accounting. In this manner, the merchants supplied small change. Silver coins were chopped by Arabs, they were chopped by Byzantines and others. However, these segmented pieces were accepted not as smaller coins, but as a specific quantity of metal, or a weight, which operated to balance real values in exchanges.⁹⁰

The well-known T. Czacki⁹¹ produced beautiful photographs, described and even gave translations of inscriptions and legends on a portion of the Arabian coins found in Lithuania (both ancient and later finds). It is regrettable that this beautifully illustrated work contained the "oldest pagan Lithuanian coins" (with fabricated names of gods and rulers' pictures!) which never existed in Lithuania! It appears that Czacki, without sufficient thought, availed himself of unproved findings of foreign countries' coins, or of counterfeits produced by frauds. At the time Czacki wrote, counterfeiters of "historical Polish-Lithuanian coins were very active and of course, unscrupulously profited by foisting their spurious "findings" upon the collections of wealthy boyars.

Activity of Arabian traders began in Lithuania during the period of the 8th and 9th centuries, and continued for about 200 years. With the end of the Samanid state (the

⁹⁰ Marion Gumowski: "Szkice..." Page 7. For example, the goldsmiths of Aden at this time were using the cut parts of English coins as the most fitting measurement in their professional work (F. Fridmore: "Cut Coins used as weights in Aden," The Numismatist, Vol. 64, XII, 1956). The practice of cutting coins is well-known in the U.S.A. Even before the war of Independence, the popular Spanish dollars (8 reales) in this country's colonies was chopped into two, four, and even eight pieces

⁹¹ It will always be profitable for every numismatist to sample Czackis' "Zbior ciekawych 14 tablic numizmatycznych," Vilnius, 1844.

last Emir, Muntassir, died in 1004) the spirited activity of Arabic tradesmen suddenly began to abate, and in a short while, stopped altogether. In the opinion of scholars, about 1012 A.D. the flow of Arabic dirhems into Europe stopped entirely.⁹² M. Henning believes that those rare Arabs who continued their foreign commerce even after the internal dissolution of their country, ceased to carry coins, and brought for exchange into foreign parts their own silk, rugs, various herbs, essences, relishes, and similar items.⁹³

No one has yet determined if Arabian merchants themselves came to Lithuania and bartered directly, or did their merchandize and coins reach our country through middlemen? The second possibility could be closer to the truth.⁹⁴ We have read of views that the farthest reached by the Arabs in their caravans was Bulgarian Kamos at the Volga. Water routes from over the Caucasus (through the Caspian Sea and the Volga river) led directly to it. The Bulgarian capital, Bulgar, was for many years the great trading center for this section near Asia. The Bulgarians themselves, under the influence of Arabian culture, had accepted Islam. Afterwards, they struck their coins after Arabian examples. It is even possible that among the coins found in Lithuania with Arabian inscriptions, are some which were struck in Bulgaria. It is believed that Arabian merchandize and coins brought there and/or struck there could have reached the Baltic region from the capital of Bulgaria through the agency of "Russians and Jews."⁹⁵

It seems to us that the "virtues" attributed to either of these groups, were endowed under the influence of conclusions reached at a later age. Because at the time of the activity referred to, really, the half-savage Russians could have by no means acted as merchants, especially for far distant trade. The Bulgarians are something else. They had learned all the tricks of the trade from the Arabs. Equally, more clarification is needed about the Jews. At that time there could not have been a large number of real Israelites in eastern Europe, and in the

⁹²See George Jacob, "Der Nordisch-Baltische Handel der Araber," Leipsig, 1887.

⁹³"Zur Verkehrsgeschichte Ost-u. Nordeuropas" (Histor. Zeitschrift, Muenchen, 1915).

⁹⁴Many Arabian coins were found in Gotland and in Sweden itself. They could have reached Gotland by way of Lithuanian-Scandinavian trade, while the Vikings (as middlemen) could have brought them to Sweden by way of the Volga and northern routes. H. Paszkiewicz assigns them that role ("The Origin," page 264).

⁹⁵This opinion was held by Babelon ("Du commerce des Arabes dans le Nord de l'Europe," Paris, 1882, page 32); he is supported by the Pole Szelongowski ("Najstarsze drogi z Polski na wschod," Cracow, 1909, page 74.).

Volga-Dnieper basin there probably were none at all. Scholars must have mistaken for Jews the well-versed in trade Chazars, whom we find in the 6th century A.D. in the lower Volga, near the Caspian, and who for reasons hard to understand, in time accepted Judaism, and became Jews. Judging from their geographical location, the Chazars would have met the Arab merchants even earlier than the Bulgars.

And it is entirely understandable. Lithuania was too far for the Arabian merchants. It is doubtful that they would venture to travel over dismal steppes, impassable morasses, endless forests and very uncivilized tribes of Slavs to reach Lithuania. So it would seem that Arabian merchandize, together of course with their coins, would have been brought beyond the eastern Slavs, by the Bulgars and the Chazars, who understood them better, as their neighbors. H. Paškevič agrees with this line of reasoning. Bolder and more experienced Slavs, of course, would have played a governing role when the merchants had to cross large tracts of later Russia by dry land. But the original roads were by river. The so-called northern tract was encompassed by the Volga and Dauguva rivers. The east central, by the Dnieper and Nemunas. On this trail we believe, the Lithuanians would meet foreign merchants not only in their own territory, but even past it, since our forefathers knew how to navigate the rivers for ages. They had the vessels and could use the waterways as well as dry land.⁹⁷

It is said that centuries after the advent of Arabian coins into Lithuania, finding these forgotten coins raised unexpected problems among the people. At that particular time, when the neighborhood of Vilnius and Trakai had been settled by Tatars, who having found an old Arabian coin, would consider it a gift straight from heaven. And reading upon it pious sentences from the Koran, would raise up their spirits to Mohammad. To Catholics on the other hand [of which is the religion of the majority of Lithuania], finding such a suspicious coin would often inspire a contrary fear. It would even bring on a situation where anyone possessing an Arabian coin was suspected of maintaining a contact with the devil, while the coins themselves proved a league with him through the unusual characters. These "confederates" of the evil spirit would experience cruel repressions from local "Torquemades" at a time when Christianity began to strengthen in Lithuania; but also, new superstitions and sorcery developed. According to J.I. Kraševski, such persons were quickly suspected of being sorcerers, were persecuted and punished.

⁹⁶"The Origin of Russia," page 118.

⁹⁷The same, page 253. And the Dusburg Chronicle mentions Lithuanians as good navigators; When the Commandant of the Crusaders from Ragaine cruised up to the castle of Veluona (in 1313), a hundred Lithuanian vessels attacked the invaders and sunk their (large) ship (Historical Sources, I, 54).

Some of them, who were found to possess Arabian coins, were even burned at the stake in Vilnius as late as 1609!⁹⁸ That is just one example. It seems that this execution was neither the first nor the last. It is well that ancient Lithuanians, preparing their poured kapos, melted large numbers of Arabian coins in their own time...

Along with Arabian coins, their influx ending, various currents of Bizantine, Germanic, Czech, Scandinavian, Polish, and other countries' modern coins found their way into Lithuania. Merchants in the 9th and 10th centuries from the East and West visited the Lithuanian nation more and more often, as much to trade here, as to travel along well-trod paths into the little known Slavic country. The famed "privileges" granted by King Mindaugas to foreign merchants must be considered the result of a well-founded state policy consequent upon many years of experience and a skillful diagnosis of our trade with aliens. Such reforms in the middle ages did not occur quickly.

In addition to foreign coins of various epochs found in the earth of historic Lithuania, the considerable quantity of silver preserved through the centuries gives the student a basis for the following conclusions: 1) The foreign trade of ancient Lithuanians, in whatever fashion it took place, was animated through the centuries; 2) It undoubtedly had a debit balance; 3) The distribution of saleable and honest products, and the preservation of the silver received for them was understood and constantly practiced. And from all this arises the phenomenon surprising not only to us: our subsoil gave us not a smidgin of precious metal, but the ancient Lithuanians, in addition to "pelt money," managed to issue silver kapos! Clearly, we cannot conceal the fact that certain specific quantities of silver, somewhat later, came home from successful military feats. However, the beginnings of this metal and later its entire source was, nevertheless, receipts from foreign trade. It, in the main, would have attracted gold into Lithuania and other stable treasures, which enabled our nation to reach these heights, from which it was able to rule the entire eastern Europe in the later middle ages.⁹⁹

⁹⁸"Wilno," III, 155.

⁹⁹H. Paszkiewicz proclaims: "Contrary to later tradition, (attempting to characterize the poverty of Lithuanians in the darkest colors) sources of the 13th and 14th centuries testify that there were significant quantities of gold, silver, and other treasures." ("The Origin of Russia," page 193).

b) the Czech or Prague Groschen

All foreign coins in Lithuania were discredited and abolished in the first half of the 14th century, when the so-called Prague Groschen [grašis is singular, grašiai is plural in Lithuanian] began to circulate. At the end of the 13th century, a large quantity of silver was located in the Kutna Hora (Kuttenberg in German) Mines, in Bohemia (Czechia and Bohemia are the same state today). This discovery decreed that Czechia, and no other state, would introduce into the rapidly deteriorating monetary situation of Europe, a silver coin which was strong, attractive and of a truly high real value. It successfully covered not only its own homeland, but neighboring nations as well, not even omitting the boundaries of states far away. A good coin everywhere receives an assured welcome.



Figure 27. Obverse and Reverse of the Grosh of Wenceslaus II of Prague

This fruitful beginning was insured by the Czech King Wenceslaus II (1278-1305). That Czech king invited moneyers from Florence, already famous for its golden "floren," and began to strike (in the words of Braun) "unforgettable Prague groshes of pure silver."¹⁰⁰

On one side of these grašiai, in the center we see the royal crown girded around by two rows of inscription: "WENCEZLAUS SECUNDUS," and "DEI GRATIA REX BOEMIE." On the reverse, in the field was the state's device (a crowned lion, with a tail knotted in an implausible knot), about which was placed the legend, "GROSSI PRAGENSES." In the tradition of the times, the inscription was in Latin, the words separated by crosses. Now, these

¹⁰⁰David Braun: "Bericht vom Polnisch u. Preussischen Muenzwesens," page 3. According to his information, the Prague grašiai began to be struck in 1296. Other authors advance the date a few years later. However, these grašiai were never "skatiks" (cents). Any Lithuanian who calls them such is mistaken.

grašiai were not of pure silver, but their content was truly very high, reaching to 0.938 in the oldest discoveries. Their diameter: about 27mm., each weighing about 3.66 gr.

From the coins earlier appearing in Europe: the Venetian "denarius grossus" (1202), Tuscany's "grossi" (about 1230); and Turin's (French) "gros Tournois" (middle of the 13th century), the word "GROSS" in the monetary sense had become familiar to people. In the widely used Latin language, "GRUSSUS" meant thick, and money-wise, from these unusually thick coins, it came to mean a "thick, large coin." With the added example of the valuable "grossi pragenses," the idea of "gross" and "grosh" began to force its way into daily European languages with all the privileges of an acceptable foreign word, being adapted of course to the individual language. The appropriate coins of silver were variously named locally. For example, the Czechs assimilated "gross" into "grosh," Germans articulated it "groschen," in the Serb-Chorvat dictionary, "hroš," the Polish "grosz," while in the Lithuanian language it acquired resident rights as "GRAŠIS" [grashis] [which is singular; grašiai is plural].

The Czech's became accustomed to trade with foreigners early, so acting competently as middlemen to their neighbors, they spread their new coins everywhere. The Prague grašiai were well known in Lithuania by the middle of the 14th century. Though these good coins encountered obstacles nowhere at the start, it is doubted that any of the very first managed to reach our country. They are very seldom found in excavations. Some of the later Czech-Bohemian rulers' grašiai forcefully penetrated Lithuania's economy, and as we shall see, in their time performed an outstanding function.

Successors of the originator of the Prague groshes, Wenceslaus II, Wenceslaus III and later Rudolph and Henry, who ruled for a short time (five years in all) apparently struck no groshes of their own.¹⁰¹ King John I, (1311-1346) of Luxemburg, struck some Prague groshes somewhat slimmer than the earlier ones. They came out a bit lighter and of a lower silver content (about 0.880). Under John's son, Karl I (1346-1378), (when he was elected Emperor, he called himself Karl IV), the groshes slumped down further. They averaged about 3.30 gr., and contained only about 0.825 of silver. Wenceslaus IV (1378-1419) debased the grosh to 0.650 of silver (some were found even down to 0.500), and their average weight declined below 3 grams. The average of the finds fluctuates to about 2.800 grams. These latter groshes, struck by speedier methods, were the most numerous to spread outside their homeland's borders. So in Lithuania they constituted the largest number in circulation until that time. According to Sivers, of the known 98 hoards,

¹⁰¹ One or more coins found in excavations with the inscription "Wenceslaus Tertius" are not issues of Wenceslaus III, but through error were so designated by Wenceslaus IV.

the largest portion of which must be attributed to the territory of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, the Prague groshes of Wenceslaus IV make up about 78% of all groshes found.¹⁰²

It is only right to state in this place that even after Wenceslaus IV the debasement of Prague groshes did not end. It was continued by Vladislov (1439-1457), George Podebrade (1457-1471) and other rulers of the country, until that coin, so surpassingly begun and so widely renounced, lost its international prestige. Clearly, everyone suffered from this.

Studying the period during which the Prague groshes flooded Lithuania (when those coins began to play a leading role here) we find undisputed factors indicating that the original impress in our country was made not by the very first groshes, but by those of John I and Karl. After all types of suspect, thin, almost worthless foreign coins, Lithuanians quickly became acquainted with the thick Pragues, became accustomed to them and began to use them as if they were their very own. In the 2nd half of the 14th century, those groshes flowed into Lithuania by the channels of commerce (through Hungary, Moldavia, Poland, and elsewhere) always in larger and larger amounts, finding here a fitting soil for themselves and a home. Part of them circulated around the country in their original shape, as convenient small change alongside the kapos, while the balance were melted down by their owners into the kapos themselves. Those not melted, in time became unofficially recognized as a second medium of exchange in Lithuania. Following their mounting progress, we note that Lithuanians began to understand now the significance of coins much more clearly than heretofore. The Prague grosh began a fierce struggle with the kapos, and as a result, that foreign specie served as a new basis of reckoning in Lithuania. Various contracts (buying and selling, leasing, deposits, loans, etc.) not only in the era of kapos alone, but even with our own coins at work in circulation, were more and more often reckoned in the groshes of Prague. In 1417, they were used in setting the stipend for the Bishop of Samogitia, though our own coins had existed for over 50 years. Equally in settling accounts with foreigners, groshes didn't defer kapos, and even dominated domestic issues.

And that is not enough. Having begun to strike their own coins in the second half of the 14th century, the Lithuanian Dukes conformed likewise to the Prague groshes, as if to some legal monetary unit. And the very word "grašis" became so imbedded in our country that it has never been forgotten. We can now remind the reader that in the period of the 16th-to 18th centuries, there were struck our own, Lithuanian grašis, alone and in multiple denominations, and various parts of the grosh. The word "grašis" has

¹⁰² A.A. Sivers: "Topografija kladov s pražskimi grošami" Peterburg, 1922.

remained in the Lithuanian language up to our own times, as unshakenly imbedded as other old immigrants from afar, as the words for priest, machine, cauldron, money, etc.

The Prague groshes domestically were combined into units of 60 "chop groshes"). As they became current in Lithuania, it was noticed that the overall weight of the 60 groshes then in use just about equalled a long kapa (or a "mane" [kartis]) in weight. For example, the grosh of Karl I weighed 3.3 gr, so 60 of them equalled approximately as much as the long kapa (about 200 gr). Although the silver content in the two did not always balance, in practice the two were deemed to be equal. Thus, alongside the poured kapa, a new monetary kapa was created, consisting of 60 separate coins (groshes).

Distinct from the poured money, the new kapos were especially attributed both in documents (and in speech). As an example, in 1383, the Crusaders' Commander accuses Jogaila of releasing only 21 Order captives, who were valued at 4 kapos of groshes, while the Crusaders liberated captive Lithuanians, for whom he should have been paid 1200 kapos of groshes. Or in 1410, the head of the Ragainės outpost spied out and notified his Commander that Vytautas had sent to Jogaila (preceding the battle of Tannenberg, to hire soldiers) 20,000 kapos of groshes. Or again, in 1392, in the purchase and sale agreement between Boyars Milaševičius and Važgaila kapos of the thick Czech groshes were specified,¹⁰³ and so forth. The poured kapos were called "long." When they were mentioned by foreigners, they used terms understandable to them. The Crusaders, for example, reckoning the damage done to them by Vytautas in 1414, called them "pencii argenti," or "stucke silbers." Others used other terms. Lithuanian coins: "kapos of groshes" were designated "x chops of groshes in Lithuanian coins."

Notwithstanding that Prague groshes became popular quickly in Lithuania, took root and conveniently fitted in without any particular problem, the production of the poured kapos in the country continued further. In preparing their regular money, our forefathers did not refrain from consuming even Prague groshes, wherever a greater quantity was collected. In order to constitute a long kapos, it was necessary to melt about 60 groshes. A small kapa, about half as much [around 30].¹⁰⁴

¹⁰³Numismat. Litewska, page 28.

¹⁰⁴The conversion of groshes into melted kapos was given a poorly understood explanation, most probably by a short news item contained in the issue of the journal, "Vytautas the Great" (Kaunas, 1930) that during Vytautas' time the Prague groshes were also struck...in Lithuania. This item is erroneous throughout.